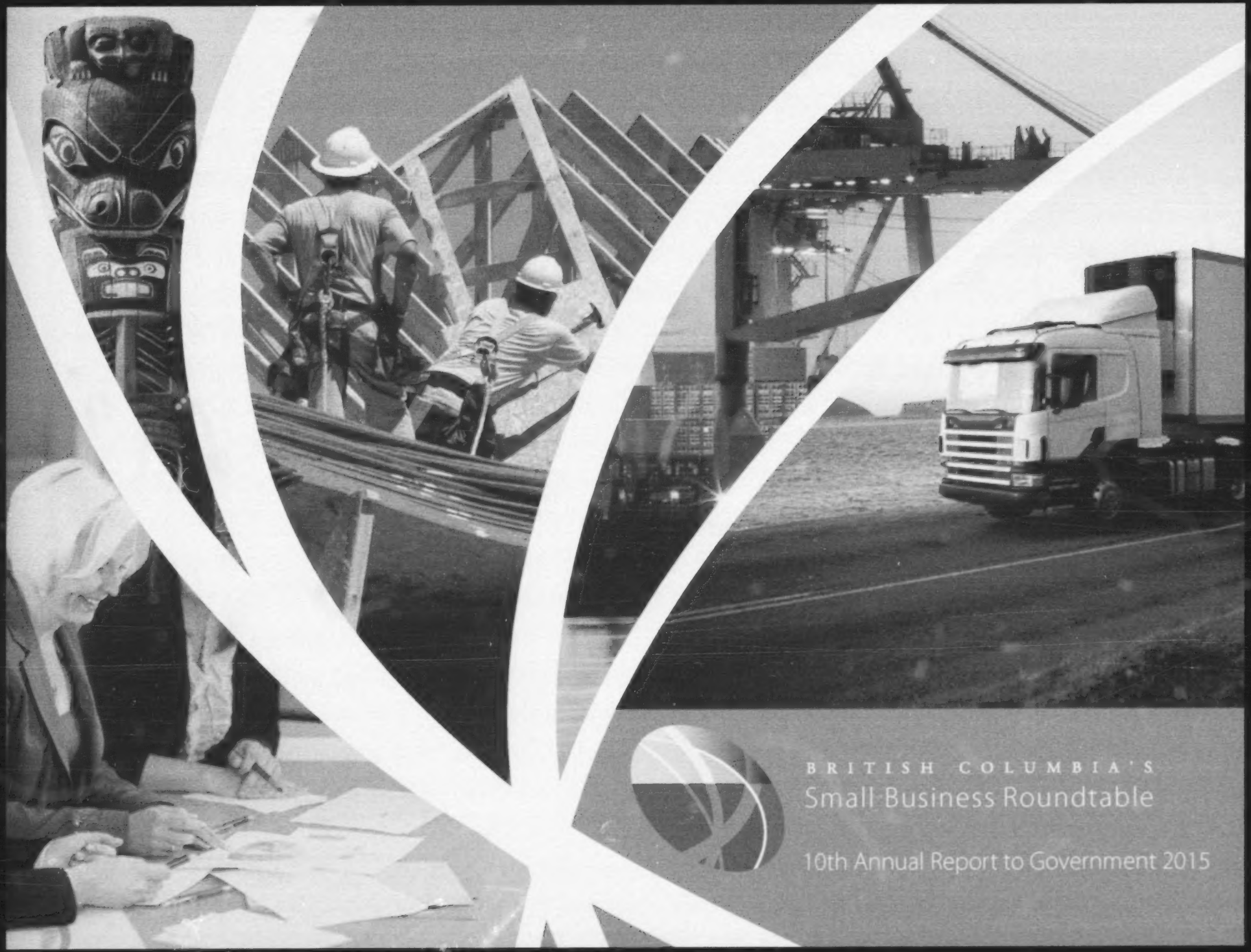


BRITISH COLUMBIA'S

Small Business Roundtable

10th Annual Report to Government 2015

SMALL BUSINESS IS BIG BUSINESS

GROWING THE ECONOMY:

Fostering the growth and success of small business benefits all British Columbians through increased job creation, innovation and economic competitiveness.

KEY STATS:

- 98% of businesses in the province are small businesses
- 382,600 total small businesses
- 51% are self employed with no employees
- 82.6 small business/1000 ppl (#1 in Canada - avg 70.9)
- 33% of GDP (Above the Canadian avg. 30%)

KEY TRENDS:

- Fastest growing sectors 2009–2014 (businesses added)
  Real Estate: +3,064
  Heath Care: +1,992
  Professional, Scientific & Tech Services: +1,841

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- Small Business Accord
  www.jtst.gov.bc.ca/sbaccord
- BC Jobs Plan
  www.bcjobsplan.ca

The Small Business Accord and its principles were established to help foster a progressive business culture where government initiatives support current and future generations of small business owners across British Columbia.

GROWING ENTREPRENEURS:

Small businesses represent the backbone of B.C. communities and cross over all business sectors, from retail stores and doctors' offices to computer programming, and even the family farm.

NUMBER OF SMALL BUSINESSES BY REGION, 2014

REGION	POP.	# OF SMALL BUSINESSES
1 Vancouver Island/Coast	784,006	67,500
2 Mainland/Southcoast	2,834,194	232,200
3 Thompson-Okanagan	539,747	46,100
4 Kootenay	148,770	11,100
5 Cariboo	156,140	11,700
6 North Coast + 7 Nechako	97,649	5,500
8 Northeast	70,796	6,800
British Columbia	4,631,302	382,600

KEY TRENDS:

- In 2014, there were 309 Aboriginal tourism businesses, in B.C. which was 18% of all Aboriginal tourism businesses in Canada
- The majority (301) were Aboriginal-owned, while 8 were Aboriginal-themed public (goverment-owned) facilities (as reported by the Aboriginal Tourism Assoc. of Canada)

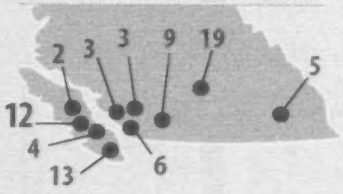
KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- Small Business BC
  www.smallbusinessbc.ca
- MentorshipBC
  www.mentorshipbc.ca
- Starting a Small Business Guide
  www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/pdf/Start_Smallbusiness.pdf

GROWING PARTNERSHIPS:

By collaborating with government we will identify actions that we can take to promote growth, reduce red tape and increase economic competitiveness.

MOBILE BUSINESS LICENCE AGREEMENTS
(# PARTICIPANTS COMMUNITIES)



KEY TRENDS:

- 87% of the province by population has BizPaL service coverage

OPEN for BUSINESS 2015 Award
program of the Province of British Columbia.

Congratulations to the five ***Open for Business*** *award winners for 2015: Abbotsford, City of Langley, Sidney, Surrey, and Fpwwassen First Nation.*

KEY TRENDS:

- The Open for Business Awards recognize municipalities and First Nations communities undertaking initiatives and partnerships to reduce cost and complexity of doing business in British Columbia
- This year, submissions were received from all eight B.C. economic regions, including 14 new community applicants

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- LNG-Buy BC
  www.lngbc.ca
- BizPaL
  www.bizpal.ca
- Mobile Business Licence
  www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/mobile.html

GROWING MARKETS:

Small Business exporters punch above their weight class – even though 98.7% of small businesses do not export, **$11 billion** worth of merchandise was exported by small business in 2013.

WHERE GOODS FLOW

Small Businesses	Export Value
USA	53%
Non USA	27%
Both USA and Non USA	20%

KEY STATS:

- Small business exporters in B.C. ship almost as much to Asia (42%) as to the United States (44%)

KEY TRENDS:

- Between June 2009 and June 2014, the real estate sales and services sector and the high technology sector recorded the strongest growth

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- Trade and Invest BC
  www.britishcolumbia.ca
- Import-Export Guide
  www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/pdf/ImpExpGuideEng.pdf

GROWING THE WORK FORCE:

1. Provide a head start to hands-on learning in schools
2. A shift in education and training to better match with jobs in demand
3. A stronger partnership with industry and labour to deliver training and apprenticeships

KEYS STATS:

- 54% of private sector jobs are provided by small business, employing over 1 million British Columbians
- Nearly 32% of wages paid by small business (#1 in Canada – just over 26% avg.)

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- Work BC
  www.workbc.ca
- BC Skills for Jobs Blue Print
  www.workbc.ca/skills

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- ...to ensure small business interests are being heard
- ...to improve government interactions with small business
- ...to simplify the regulatory environment
- ...to improve government coordination
- ...to improve access to small business training resources
- ...to help small business sell to government

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Who We Are... small business owners and advocates for B.C.'s small business community

Angie Barnard
Founder,
TripTide Canada

NANAIMO

Ashley Ramsay
Founder & CEO,
Yeti Farm Creative

KELOWNA

Cybele Negris
CEO & Co-founder
Webnames.ca Inc.
Vice-Chair,
Small Business Roundtable

VANCOUVER

Ian Tostenson
President/CEO, British Columbia Restaurant and Food Services Association

VANCOUVER

Ingrid Hope
Owner & President,
Hall Printing

TRAIL AND NELSON

Randy Richmond
Vice President and Partner,
Spearhead.ca

NELSON

John Cameron
Chief Executive Officer,
ROCK SOLID Business Coaching Inc.

LANGLEY

Chief Judy Wilson
Chief, Neskonlith
Indian Band

CHASE

Mark Startup
Vice President,
Retail Council of Canada

VANCOUVER

MJ Whitemarsh
CEO, Whitemarsh Enterprises
Former CEO, Canadian Home Builders' Association

NORTH VANCOUVER AND SOOKE

Jill Doucette
Owner,
Synergy Enterprises

VICTORIA

Robert (Bob) J. Redden
Partner & President,
Environmental Dynamics Inc.

PRINCE GEORGE

Samantha Howard
Director, B.C.,
Canadian Federation of Independent Business

VANCOUVER

Sean Surerus
Vice President,
Surerus Pipeline Inc.

FORT ST. JOHN

Sue Adams
Managing Partner,
Beverdale Enterprises Inc.

WHISTLER

For inquiries contact RoundtableSecretariat@gov.bc.ca

A Message from the Roundtable

We are pleased to bring to you the Small Business Roundtable's 10th Annual Report to Government. The permanent Small Business Roundtable (Roundtable) was created in 2005 in recognition of the small business community's significant contribution to British Columbia's economy.

We are grateful for the continued support of elected and unelected government leaders who have implemented Roundtable-driven initiatives that contribute to small business growth and success. To our departed Chair, the Honourable Naomi Yamamoto, the **BC Small Business Accord** is a tremendous legacy that we will continue to work diligently to help your successors implement. Our new Chair, and former Roundtable member, the **Honourable Coralee Oakes** is a strong advocate for B.C.'s entrepreneurs and the organizations and government programs that support them. With the creation of the Province's newest Ministry of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and Minister Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch we are confident that our 'Voice to Government' will be amplified.

Honourable Coralee Oakes

Chair

Minister of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and Minister Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch

Small business success is critical to the province's economic well-being, accounting for ***98%*** of business and ***55%*** of private sector jobs. Small businesses employed over one million people in British Columbia in 2014. Small business is important to the Government of British Columbia and the Roundtable's permanent advisory board status reinforces the Province's commitment to supporting small business growth and success. Members of the newly formed Small Business Accord Advisory Forum are applying a small business lens to initiatives that impact small businesses. They have presented their findings to the Roundtable and have asked specific questions to capture recommendations from the Roundtable to make their initiatives more 'open for business'.

The Roundtable would like to take this opportunity to not only thank our departed Roundtable members who left us over the course of the last year, but also welcome our newest members. We would like to recognize departing members Cindy Choi, David Littlejohn and John Winter (founding members), Robert Fine (appointed 2007), and Kelly McCormack (appointed 2008), for their many years of service to B.C.'s small business community. Roundtable members who joined us over the past year include Angie Barnard, Jill Doucette, Ingrid Hope, Samantha Howard, Ashley Ramsay, Bob Redden, Randy Richmond and Sean Surerus. Their skills, experience and small business and community leadership will contribute to the continued success of the Roundtable.

The preparation of this 10th Annual Report gave us an opportunity to reflect on a decade of Roundtable accomplishments, many of which are still evolving into new and innovative initiatives. These initiatives have come about as a result of a variety of Roundtable consultations aimed at engaging small business owners and industry representatives throughout British Columbia. We are leveraging this feedback with government at our quarterly meetings by inviting government program and policy leads to present and we provide advice on appropriate steps to address small business concerns and opportunities.

Considerable efforts have been made to improve the small business climate in the province; however, we acknowledge that more work needs to be done to make B.C. the most small business-friendly jurisdiction in Canada. In this report, we have put forward recommendations to both government and the small business community based on the Four Pillars of the Roundtable: Human Resources and Education; Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction; Economic Growth; and Small Business Issues. To view the small business accord visit:

www.jtst.gov.bc.ca/sbaccord

The Small Business Roundtable Board ☑

Who We Are

Chaired by the *Honourable Coralee Oakes*, Minister of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and Minister Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch, the Roundtable is a permanent board established in 2005 to serve the small business community as its 'Voice to Government'. We are small business leaders from across the province who meet regularly to represent our regions and economic sectors in order to provide advice to government to further the interests of the small business community.

What We Do

The Four Pillars of the Roundtable are: Human Resources and Education; Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction; Economic Growth; and Small Business Issues. Members who have been with the Roundtable since its inception attribute its success and longevity to its founding mandate asking members to:

1. engage in a dialogue with small business to identify key issues and opportunities;
2. develop recommendations to government and to small business owners on strategies to improve B.C.'s small business climate;
3. identify and undertake selected initiatives to enhance the competitiveness of the small business sector; and
4. advocate for small business interests in the province.

We discuss small business issues and opportunities of the day with government leaders, elected and unelected, as well as organizations that are seeking Roundtable support and feedback to create awareness of initiatives that support small business growth and success.

Why a Permanent 'Voice to Government'?

The Roundtable has highlighted 'A Decade of Action' to detail its key accomplishments, including the *BC Small Business Accord* (Accord) which was established to improve government's interactions with small business to foster a progressive business culture. The Accord concept was first conceived by a Roundtable member in 2012 and was developed in consultation with the small business community in 2013. Through continued engagement with their small business networks, the Roundtable members have provided government with priorities and recommendations to further the Accord. The Roundtable's *Open for Business Awards* promote adoption of the Accord by local governments, including First Nations, by celebrating communities that are operating in the spirit of the Accord.

Receiving the 'A Grade' from CFIB on B.C.'s Red Tape Report Card

By seeking the advice of the Roundtable, government has made significant progress in the area of regulatory reform and red tape reduction. British Columbia is the only province in Canada to get an 'A' grade for regulatory reform by the *Canadian Federation of Independent Business* for FOUR CONSECUTIVE YEARS!

The Roundtable believes that the Accord is fostering a cultural change within government and it is possible that an 'A Grade' in each of the Four Pillars is achievable. As part of our recommendations to government we have identified four Grade 'A' Open for Business initiatives that the Roundtable believes will further the Accord. We believe these recommendations are blue-sky game changers that will set the stage for the B.C. small business agenda for the foreseeable future.

BRITISH COLUMBIA
BC Small Business Accord
We are in business to create the most small business friendly jurisdiction in Canada
Goal
Principles
Consider the needs and impacts of small businesses in policy and program decisions to enhance business certainty, access to qualified labour, access to capital and technology adoption.
Foster a regulatory environment that small business can access, navigate and influence effectively and efficiently.
Design government programs and resources affecting small business so that they are well developed, accessible, properly funded and effectively communicated.
Foster thoughtful collaboration among all levels of government, including First Nations.
Deploy educational and training programs that are future-focused and aligned to meet the changing needs of small business and the labour talent it develops.
Create long-term growth opportunities for small business through government procurement.
Pat Corbett
Dave Mathieson
Robin Lapointe
Bill Downing
Brad Hill
Greg Munden
Annemarie Templeman Kluit

Laura Jones, Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business presents B.C. with its fourth "A Grade" for Red Tape Reduction

A DECADE OF ACTION:
Human Resources and Education

- **The Building Skills for Small Business Fund (2007 to present)** has provided over $1 million towards projects such as *Venture Connect* to support and create awareness of its succession planning services. It was also used to expand the reach of the *Women's Enterprise Centre* mentorship program across the province. Most recently the Fund will be used to pilot an Aboriginal Business Services Network Youth Mentorship Train-the-Trainer Program in partnership with *Junior Achievement BC*.

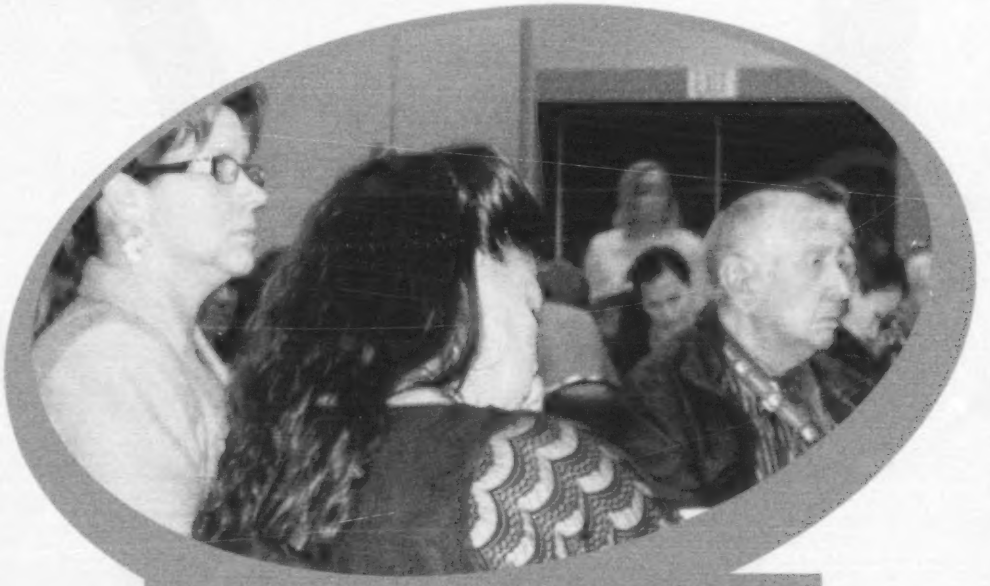
- **Junior Achievement of British Columbia (JABC) (2005 to present)** is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating youth about business and has received $5 million in total funding from the Province since 2006. This January, the B.C. Government, with the support of the Roundtable, invested $1 million to support *JABC*'s expansion strategy and delivery.

- **The Skills Training for Micro-Business Pilot (2012)** program offered through the *BC Chamber of Commerce* delivered up to $1,500 in training to over 1,200 business owners. Eligible business owners were those with no formal education beyond grade 12, and with less than five employees. A Roundtable-funded study of this program and year one of the *Canada-B.C. Job Grant* is currently underway to better position year two of the Canada-B.C. Job Grant for micro-business owners.

- **The Starting a Small Business Guide & Import/Export Guides (2014)** are used by our small business stakeholders and educational institutions to help those *planning or starting* a small business to navigate the world of *international trade*. The Roundtable was able to contribute input to the *Small Business BC*-updated guides to ensure that the information in the guides addressed the questions and concerns of small business owners.

- **Aboriginal Small Business Consultation (2009 to present)** helps the Roundtable understand and address the unique needs of Aboriginal small business owners and continues to be a priority of the Roundtable. At the *2014 consultation*, the fourth of its kind, the Roundtable developed two actions items to support Aboriginal entrepreneurship:

  1. Establish a mentorship program to support youth entrepreneurship in Aboriginal communities; and
  2. Extend an invitation to First Nations communities to apply to win $10,000 in the *2015 Open for Business Awards*.



Aboriginal small business leaders gather in October 2014 to discuss growing regional economic development opportunities for First Nations

A DECADE OF ACTION:
Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

- **The Small Business Accord (2013)** came to fruition with the help of the Roundtable. Our members helped expand the reach of consultations to over 35,000 participants in support of *the Accord's* development. The Province established a cross-ministry Small Business Accord Advisory Forum to create awareness of the Accord within government and the small business community. The Small Business Accord Advisory Forum has identified many of the issues brought to the Roundtable's attention in the past year.

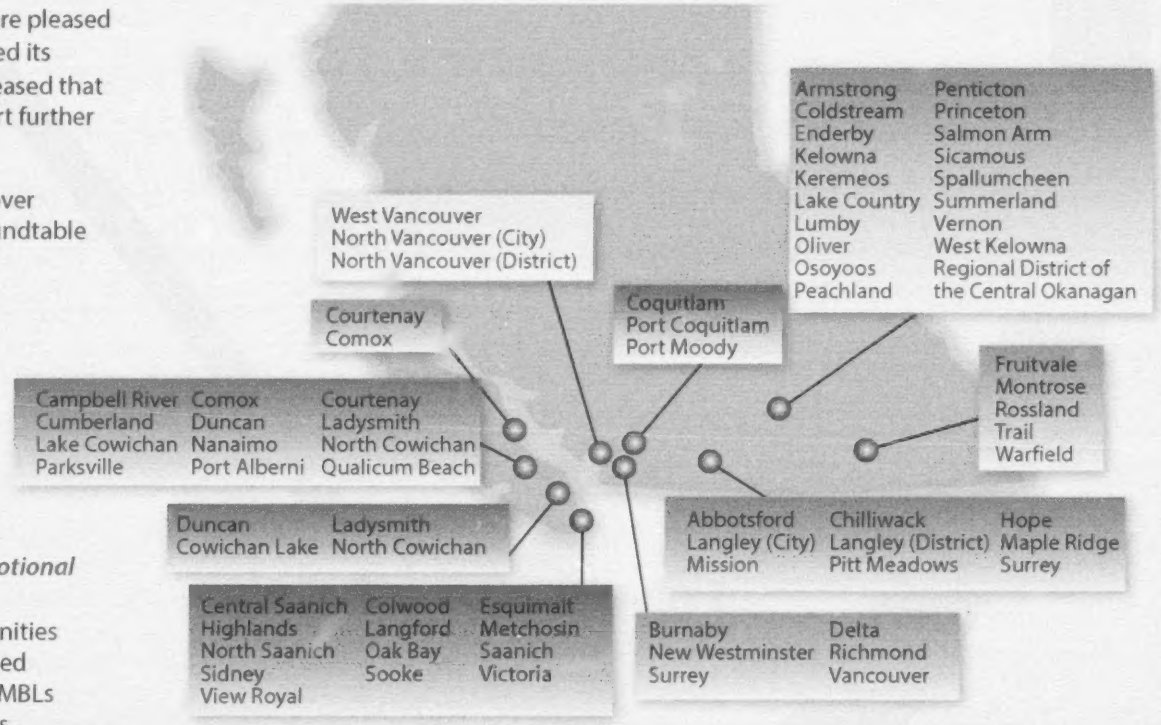
- **The Province's regulatory reform agenda and associated policy framework (2007 to present)** help the B.C. Government eliminate unnecessary red tape. We are pleased that in January 2015, the B.C. Government extended its *Net Zero Increase Commitment* to 2019. We are pleased that our new Chair will be seeking our advice to support further red tape and regulatory streamlining efforts.

- **Regional Consultations (2005 to present)** with over 1,100 individuals have been conducted by the Roundtable at *53 consultation events* since 2005. Roundtable members continue to gather input and feedback from their small business networks and bring fresh solutions to the Roundtable to inform recommendations. This upcoming fall/winter, the Roundtable will host an export-themed consultation.

- **The Mobile Business Licence (MBL) Program (2005 to present)** has been championed by the Roundtable through the production of a *promotional video* in 2009 *detailing MBL benefits*. Roundtable members continue to advocate within our communities and business networks for a single-licence, simplified licensing framework for participating regions. The MBLs now reach 69 communities through 10 agreements.

- **Tax Competitiveness (2005)** continues to be promoted by our members in order to maintain B.C.'s status as having one of the lowest corporate tax rates in North America. To make tax remittance easier, the Roundtable helped finalize the Ministry of Finance's PST transition tools and outreach plan. The Roundtable is actively advocating that the Ministry of Finance work closely with small businesses that export goods and services to better understand PST obligations in order to minimize their tax burden.

Mobile Business Licence Program Participants



A DECADE OF ACTION:
Economic Growth

- **Minimum Wage Adjustment (ongoing)** was recently addressed by the Province, which is aware that often some small business owners themselves do not take home the minimum wage as they work long hours and reinvest their profits into their business. The Roundtable advocated for reasonable and predictable wage adjustments tied to the Consumer Price Index with the last increase to $10.45 put into effect on September 15, 2015.

- **The Open for Business Awards (2013 to present)** have celebrated 21 communities since 2013 and recently recognized Mayor Stewart Young for establishing Langford as a leader in business licence innovation. Most communities won $10,000 by best demonstrating that they are operating within the spirit of the Accord. As an action item from the 2014 Aboriginal Small Business Consultation, First Nations were invited to apply for the first time. This year, five First Nations communities submitted applications. In the *Open for Business Awards: Best Practices Guide* we highlighted measures that distinguished winners and finalists from the 2013 and 2014 submission intake.

- **The Two Page Request for Proposal (RFP) (2014)** form was long advocated for by the Roundtable and has been developed with our input. Results to date are positive as the B.C. Government surpassed its goal to distribute *short-form RFPs* and sent out 89 short-form RFPs in 2014/15. The Province is seeking Roundtable feedback to update the *BC Bid website* based on the recommendations identified in the Small Business – Doing Business with Government Project.

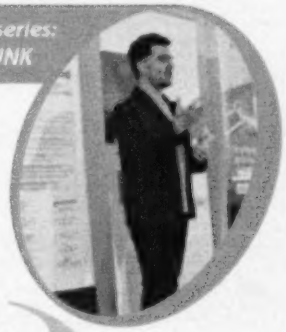
- **Asia-Pacific Focus (2007 to present)** when first conceived, required the Roundtable's input to make the Asia-Pacific opportunities more accessible to small businesses. Considerable investments and trade missions conducted by the Province have strengthened ties between our marketplaces. Most recently the LNG-Buy BC initiative has helped small businesses position themselves for several LNG projects that are nearing a final investment decision by proponents.

- **The 2010 Olympics and Paralympic Business Hosting Program (2010)** showcased B.C.'s competitive advantages to hundreds of business leaders and top government dignitaries. During the games, over 113 events were held reaching over 15,000 participants and over 1,000 businesses. According to Aboriginal Tourism BC, significant momentum has been generated in the Aboriginal tourism sector as a result of this initiative.

UBCM Open for Business Workshop Panel

A DECADE OF ACTION:
Small Business Issues

Creating Awareness about Small Business Resources



Small Business BC Local Leaders series: Brian Scudamore of 1-800-GOT-JUNK

- **LiveSmart BC's Small Business Program (2011 to 2014)** was created with input from the Roundtable regarding design and partnership development to increase the reach of the program. Promotion of this *LiveSmart BC's* program by the Roundtable ultimately saved $6 million in electricity costs by effectively helping small businesses reduce electricity and energy consumption. The program was extended until 2014 due to its great success and now resides within *FortisBC* and *BC Hydro*.
- **The Small Business Awareness Strategy (2014)** was developed with the help of the Roundtable to increase awareness of existing resources available to small business owners. We are pleased to have participated in several events hosted by Small Business BC, such as the *Local Leaders* series and *MyBizDay* tour across the province. These events raise awareness of the Roundtable and resources that empower small businesses to grow and succeed.
- **The Venture Connect Project (2013 to present)** was originally conceived as a co-funded federal and provincial government's pilot project to provide preparation and matching services to business sellers and potential buyers that help keep viable businesses in their communities. The Roundtable is pleased that *Venture Connect* is self-sustaining and no longer requires public funding to provide resources and tools to help business owners educate themselves about succession planning.
- **The Business Walks 101 (2015)** guide is a tool designed to help foster a better understanding of small business issues and opportunities among all levels of government so appropriate action can be taken. *This tool* is used by local governments to design engagement strategies and reporting. Several business walks are planned for Small Business Month in October 2015 and will have Roundtable members in attendance.
- **B.C. Climate Action Plan** was developed in consultation with the Roundtable. A new round of consultations have been completed and we look forward to providing input that will position small businesses as community leaders in environmental sustainability.

"The Small Business Roundtable's interest in, advocacy for and funding for Venture Connect played an important role in our establishment. Since their support we have gone on to directly work with just under 150 business owners throughout the province, provided workshops on Business Owners' Succession Strategies to 291 business owners representing 180 businesses in 30 communities, presented to 173 stakeholders on the impacts of demographic shifting and marketed thousands of businesses for sale attracting new business owners to many communities in the province. We are thankful for the assistance of the Roundtable and are pleased to report we are now self-sustaining."

Lori Camire, Executive Director
Community Futures
Alberni Clayoquot

Lake Country Business Walks

MEETING OUR MANDATE

Human Resources and Education

What We Have Heard

Having a qualified workforce is the most important resource for small businesses to grow and succeed. Furthermore, during early consultations conducted by the Roundtable, recruitment and retention of skilled labour was a major issue raised by small business owners in all regions. Communicating regional labour market needs will help students determine a career path. A sectoral approach to develop group-sponsored apprenticeships would get the attention of prospective apprentices as opposed to a passive approach which has limited success.

Our Priorities

- To help mitigate the impacts of modifications to the Government of Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker program, we pressed the Province to ensure that the federal government use their databases to drive policies that are regionally sensitive to employer needs for a qualified workforce.
  - Our Chair will invite the federal minister responsible to a future quarterly meeting to discuss the findings from their database analysis.
- The construction industry finds it difficult to recruit the necessary tradespeople for the numerous projects underway in the province and smaller retail and hospitality industries are having difficulty attracting employees.
  - We are leveraging our networks to create awareness of policies and programs hosted by *WorkBC.ca* that match small businesses with qualified employees.
- Small business owners stressed the importance of promoting careers in small business and trades in high schools as an alternative to a university education. It has been recognized that there has not been enough communication or promotion of: the increasing number of females entering trades; increasing wage levels; and the exciting challenges created by technological advancement in the trades.
  - Along with the *Premier's Women's Economic Council* and the *Women's Enterprise Centre* we will champion organizations working with youth to educate women about the trades, business and entrepreneurship.

Soirée Planners and Soirée Lounge

Learn how the Women's Enterprise Centre and Small Business BC helped Kim Trehan realize her dream of owning her own business. Her event planning businesses, Soirée Planners and Soirée Lounge, are now in the growth stage and Kim is once again working with Small Business BC for support in taking her businesses to the next level.

Watch the video: **https://youtu.be/5zpgPjKXkb4**

Resources to Identify and Develop Talent

BRITISH COLUMBIA | WorkBC.ca

www.workbc.ca

Junior Achievement CANADA

www.british-columbia.jacan.org

WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE CENTRE

www.womensenterprise.ca

ita
YOUR TICKET.

www.itabc.ca

Roundtable-recommended Grade 'A' Open for Business initiative to further the Accord.

To build on the recent *grant* provided to JABC to deliver financial literacy and business/entrepreneurship education, we recommend that the Ministry of Education explore opportunities to further integrate online Junior Achievement BC programs to all K-12 students.

OPEN *for* BUSINESS

The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia, with Junior Achievement award winners – ***2015 Business*** Hall of Fame Gala

MEETING OUR MANDATE

Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

What We Have Heard

Unnecessary red tape costs businesses time and money they often cannot afford to waste. Streamlining processes and modernizing regulations to reflect the needs of today's economy helps B.C.'s small businesses remain competitive. British Columbia continues to lead Canada in this regard as demonstrated in recently ***extending the Net Zero Increase Commitment*** to 2019.

Our Priorities

- *Regulatory Reform BC*, through its *Annual Report: Achieving a Modern Regulatory Environment*, highlight efforts to modernize regulation, streamline processes and enhance service and access for business and citizens.
  - The Roundtable has recently established a Red Tape Reduction Committee composed of Roundtable board members with a mandate to identify regulatory barriers for small business and make recommendations to reduce red tape and expand the reach of *Mobile Business Licences* and *BizPaL* into new communities.
  - We have had several discussions to determine how to support franchisees and persons with disabilities to ensure that policies under development better serve these communities, create certainty and promote competitiveness.
  - The *Starting a Restaurant in BC* initiative has been used as a template to understand the licencing and permitting requirements in the new home construction and commercial transport industries and will continue to evolve. In January 2015 a *new online guide* was launched to help entrepreneurs improve compliance and avoid unnecessary delays.
- Navigating the regulatory environment is a concern facing all small business owners. Improving awareness of business education and advisory services can help owners prepare and manage red tape effectively.
  - *Small Business BC* is one of many organizations in British Columbia that partner to support entrepreneurs by providing education and business advisory services that are timely, relevant and results-oriented.
  - Through the Roundtable's participation and promotion of the *MyBizDay* tour and *Local Leaders* series presented by Small Business BC, small business owners were inspired and empowered.
- While we recognize that liquor wholesale pricing is a means to improve transparency between wholesale pricing and retail pricing while maintaining a revenue neutral position for the Province, we raised the expectation that business certainty is also a priority for small business owners.
  - The liquor industry is extremely price-sensitive so we encouraged the Province to keep the model fundamentally the same to allow time for the market to adjust, while allowing for some flexibility to meet industry or government needs.

Fully Managed

Joel Abramson, Vice-President of Fully Managed Inc., a managed service company based in Vancouver, speaks about the high growth that the company has experienced over the last couple of years and how the company's Small Business BC Award for Best Employer in 2014 has helped attract and retain quality employees and clients.

Watch the video: **https://youtu.be/Ceozku7WxdM**

Resources that make it easier to do business

SMALL BUSINESS BC

www.smallbusinessbc.ca

BizPaL

Business starts here

www.bcbizpal.ca

BCeID

www.bceid.ca

BCIC

BC INNOVATION COUNCIL

www.bcic.ca

Roundtable-recommended Grade 'A' Open for Business initiative to further the Accord.

Business owners from all regions are not only saving time and money, but also feeling less frustration when doing business across municipalities. We recommend the Province build on the Mobile Business Licence (MBL) database to provide a shared service platform, in consultation with the ***Union of B.C. Municipalities*** (UBCM), which all municipalities in the province could use to sell and track business licences and deliver other e-solutions. Ultimately, this tool could deliver auto-complete functionality to forms and could be leveraged to extend the MBL program to all regions of the province as a regional business licence.

OPEN for BUSINESS

BizPaL Coverage
by Development Region

*2011 Census Population Total = 4,400,057

BizPaL continues to push forward, engaging with communities, and creating partnerships throughout the province

MEETING OUR MANDATE

Economic Growth

What We Have Heard

Governments serve local businesses best when they get out of the way and build infrastructure that helps businesses get goods and services to their customers. The Open for Business Awards are the Roundtable's way of thanking progressive communities for showing leadership in this regard. To grow the economy, industry sector associations can also show their leadership by raising awareness and change the way people think about exporting and other emerging opportunities.

Aboriginal small business leaders gather in October 2014 to discuss growing regional economic development opportunities for First Nations

Priorities for 2015

- At the *October 2014 Aboriginal Small Business Consultation*, it was evident that partnerships between non-Aboriginal firms and First Nations boost regional economic growth, and that the role of Aboriginal small businesses in economic development is a source of pride in the communities where they are based.
  - In 2015, for the first time, First Nation communities were invited to participate in the *2015 Open for Business Awards* to profile their leadership and successes related to fostering entrepreneurship.
  - We are supporting the development of a Train-the-Trainer Mentorship program to be jointly delivered by *Aboriginal Business Service Network* and *Junior Achievement BC*.
  - The Roundtable will continue to promote economic development opportunities with First Nations and Aboriginal small businesses through organizations such as *MentorshipBC* and the *Women's Enterprise Centre*.
- Clear, flexible and simplified guidelines on what is and is not taxable, as it relates to PST remittance policies, require continual enhancement to maintain competitiveness with taxation regimes in other jurisdictions.
  - To further support the *Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code*, we have provided detailed steps that could be undertaken by government to provide clear information and simplify processes to support exporters.
- Becoming an exporter is difficult. Many of the services to build export capacity are similar but front-end services are not easily accessible and are offered in pockets.
  - The Roundtable has hosted several Ministry of International Trade presentations in advance of an export-themed Roundtable consultation planned in the coming year. The session will be designed to seek feedback from small business owners to determine how government can grow the export readiness and capacity of small business.

Resources that foster a progressive business environment

CANADA STARTS HERE | BC JOBS PLAN

www.bcjobsplan.ca

Regulatory Reform BC Annual Report

Open for Business Best Practices Guide

Roundtable-recommended Grade 'A' Open for Business initiative to further the Accord.

We recommend that, to further the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, B.C. must act as a provincial leader of an internal trade agreement by 2020.
OPEN for BUSINESS
Awards

Open for Business Award Winners 2015

OPEN *for* BUSINESS *2015 Award*

This year's 2015 winners are...

- Abbotsford
- City of Langley
- Sidney
- Surrey
- Tsawwassen First Nation

We would also like to recognize this year's Open for Business Awards finalists...

- Nisga'a Nation
- Prince Rupert

This year, **Mayor Stewart Young of Langford** was also given Honourable Mention in recognition of his leadership in red tape reduction on behalf of B.C.'s small business community.

MEETING OUR MANDATE

Small Business Issues

What We Have Heard

Creating an 'open for business' environment will help businesses devote their energy and resources to building partnerships and accessing capital and expertise to increase competitiveness. When seeking feedback from the small business community on initiatives that impact them, government and its agencies should use market-based survey tools or a proxy agency to avoid a government look and feel and expect that feedback may only come after a relationship with the program area is built and sincerity and respect is established.

A panel of successful small business owners discuss strategies to overcome challenges and the resources available to small businesses at Small Business BC's MyBizDay event in Kelowna

Priorities for 2015

- High-speed Internet access for all small businesses in B.C. remains a priority. Roundtable members continue to hear feedback from their networks that regional Internet access is not keeping up with business needs.
  - We will continue to encourage government to provide services in-person and by phone until high-speed Internet has reached all corners of the province.
- Running a business takes time. In 2013, 26% of those self-employed worked more than 50 hours a week. It is often difficult for small business owners to find the time to research government programs and services or reach out to service providers.
  - We commit to participate in locally-driven business walks to help establish local small business priorities that all levels of government can address in partnership with local business organizations.
  - To support the Small Business Awareness Strategy we will continue to not only foster the growth of programs to help businesses access funding, but also raise awareness of resources at small business-targeted events such as Small Business BC's *MyBizDay* tour.
- Succession planning continues to be a business retention and expansion priority in smaller communities, especially for traditional, family-run businesses. Access to capital is a concern for small business owners looking to sell or retire.
  - As a commitment to small business owners hoping to sell their business, the Roundtable will continue to work at the community level so that small business owners are made aware of succession planning resources accessible through organizations such as *Community Futures* and *Venture Connect*.

Key online portals to the Roundtable and Government

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S Small Business Roundtable

smallbusinessroundtable.ca

@SBRoundtableBC

Community Futures British Columbia

www.communityfutures.ca

British Columbia's Small Business Resources

Roundtable-recommended Grade 'A' Open for Business initiative to further the Accord.

The Roundtable would like to see the Government engage with stakeholders and other levels of government to implement a strategy to expand high-speed Internet access to all British Columbians by 2021. With high-speed Internet access, our province's entrepreneurs and talent in rural communities will have better access to opportunities and resources to support their ambitions.

OPEN *for* BUSINESS

Community legacies funded by the $10,000 award provided to Open for Business winners

City of Langley Summer Series – Theatre in the Plaza

New downtown business sign in Smithers

Shuswap Launch-a-preneur

Port Coquitlam Po Co BizAlley

Recommendations to Government to Further the Accord

Human Resources and Education

1. *Accessibility 2024* encourages small businesses to hire seniors and persons with disabilities and may require legislation and regulations to raise societal expectations and achieve these goals. These requirements must be enabling in nature rather than heavy-handed and compliance-based.

2. Prior to graduation, technical school and university students should be encouraged by government to pursue training in professional services, project management and supervisory roles in the natural resource, construction and manufacturing sectors.

3. To foster regional workforce development, government should develop partnerships to deliver labour market walks and sector-sponsored events to profile *WorkBC.ca*'s job match tool.

Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

1. Continue to support *BizPaL* expansion and platform enhancements so that all municipalities and First Nations communities that could benefit from using the *BizPaL* tool are participating in the program.

2. Further the work of the sector mapping project to streamline permitting and licensing in the restaurant, home construction and commercial trucking sectors. We would like to see further mapping in other sectors such as daycare, seniors care, manufacturing (agrifoods) and retail liquor.

3. Crown Corporations should also work with the Small Business Accord Advisory Forum to discuss measures that they can or have undertaken to align with the *Accord*.

Economic Growth

1. Every two years, the Small Business Accord Advisory Forum should identify regional economic acceleration opportunities for First Nations communities and communicate these to the Roundtable so that opportunities can be discussed at the Roundtable's *Aboriginal Small Business Consultations*.

2. Continue to implement the Small Business Awareness Strategy so that small business owners are aware of all policy and programs available to them. Look for synergies within the *BC Jobs Plan* to highlight specific advertising campaign resources that support business skills and employee trades development.

3. Develop partnerships with post-secondary institutions and key *BC Jobs Plan* industry associations to populate the *BC Economic Atlas* (Atlas) with local economic statistics and labour market research. This will allow the Atlas to be leveraged as an economic gardening tool to develop supply chains and keep business plans current.

Small Business Issues

1. Each year, to highlight trends and process improvements for PST audits, the Consumer Taxation Audit Branch should report out regularly to the Roundtable on what is getting assessed and what is not.

2. Identify those businesses bidding on large government projects and encourage them to consider providing small businesses sub-contracting opportunities for project components prior to bid submission.

3. Establish 'Open for Business' Walks Month in May to profile the future launches of the *Open for Business Awards* and facilitate conversations among community leaders, administrators, economic development officials, and small business owners. This will identify local opportunities and challenges faced by small businesses with an eye on how government and small business can enable growth and success in their community.

Human Resources and Education

In 2005, a Royal Bank of Canada study estimated that Canadians with disabilities account for an estimated $25 billion in consumer spending each year. It was also estimated that every person with a disability, approximately one in seven people, influences the spending decisions of an additional 12 to 15 people. In response to *Accessibility 2024*, identifying hiring opportunities for persons with disabilities and strategies to make a business more accessible should be a priority for business owners.

The Roundtable recommends that government work with partners such as *WorkBC.ca* and *Community Living BC* to provide services that match persons with disabilities and seniors seeking work with small businesses positioned to hire at the local level.

Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

The BC Bid modernization is an action item identified in the *Small Business - Doing Business with Government Project* so that businesses can more easily access B.C. public sector bid opportunities.

Share your insights with the Roundtable on how to best improve the BC Bid site as planning is now underway to improve its processes, tools and technology.

Economic Growth

Through organizations such as *Community Futures*, small business owners in B.C. have all the information and resources they need to begin their succession planning.

Small business owners that wish to be matched with entrepreneurs interested in purchasing an existing business should meet with Community Futures to explore what local succession planning resources exist for their industry sector.

Small Business Issues

Implementing technology and innovating in the workplace is a worthwhile investment of time and money to make a business more competitive and connected to emerging markets.

- Contact business advisors at *Small Business BC* to identify potential technology solution providers.
- Leverage the *B.C. Institute of Technology's* directed studies programs to pair your business with students that will work to support innovation at minimal cost. Once matched, these project teams are subject to a non-disclosure agreement where students apply learned skills under the direction of faculty and project advisors for a $500 fee.

Commitments Moving Forward...

1. Support small business growth and success.
2. Work with government through our Chair, the Honourable Coralee Oakes, to implement the BC Small Business Accord across the province.
3. Work with UBCM and First Nations to position the Open for Business Awards as a tool for small, medium and large communities to share best practices that will establish B.C. as the Most Small Business-Friendly Jurisdiction in Canada.
4. Determine how to best help small businesses become export-ready by hosting an export-themed small business consultation.
5. Create awareness within our networks to better connect B.C. small businesses to the LNG – Buy BC Online Supplier Registry Tool.
6. Support Aboriginal Tourism BC and Aboriginal Business Services Network to establish an Aboriginal small business-orientated mentorship program on MentorshipBC's web portal.
7. Encourage the Province to develop a list of indicators that would support action in areas where B.C. could become more small business-friendly and highlight to small business where B.C. is well-positioned in the global market place.

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S
Small Business Roundtable

www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca